

Black Sea Bass Data Update for 2020

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Reported 2019 landings in the commercial fishery were 1,579 mt = 3.483 million lb, an increase of 4% from 2018, and 99% of the 2019 commercial quota. Estimated 2019 landings in the recreational fishery were 3.914 mt = 8.630 million lb, a decrease of 2% from 2018. Total commercial and recreational landings in 2019 were 5,493 mt = 12.112 million lb, a decrease of 1% from 2018 (Figure 1).

The total index of abundance has steadily increased since 2015 (Figure 2). The large 2011 cohort was apparent in the NEFSC spring 2013 survey abundance index. The NEFSC spring survey length frequency distributions show an above average 2015 cohort has been evident in the index since 2017 (note that the 2020 information is from an incomplete survey) (Figure 3).

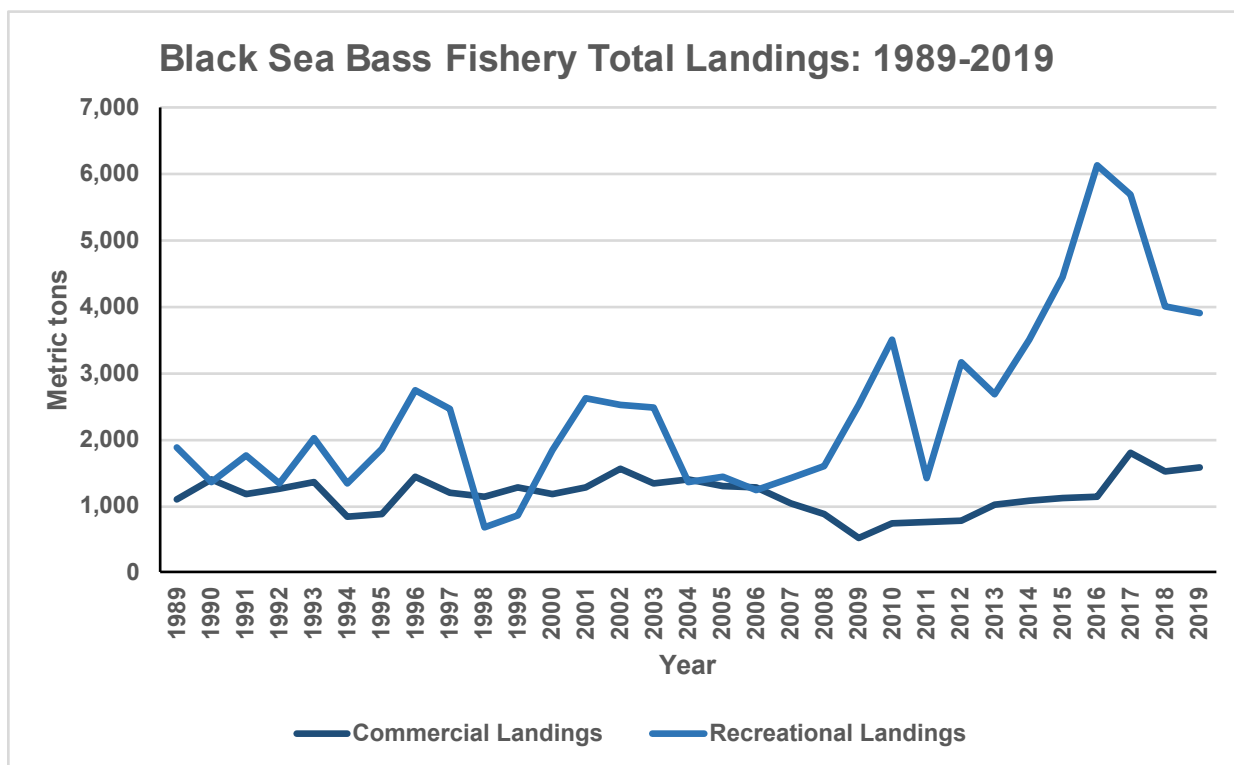


Figure 1. Black Sea Bass fishery total landings.

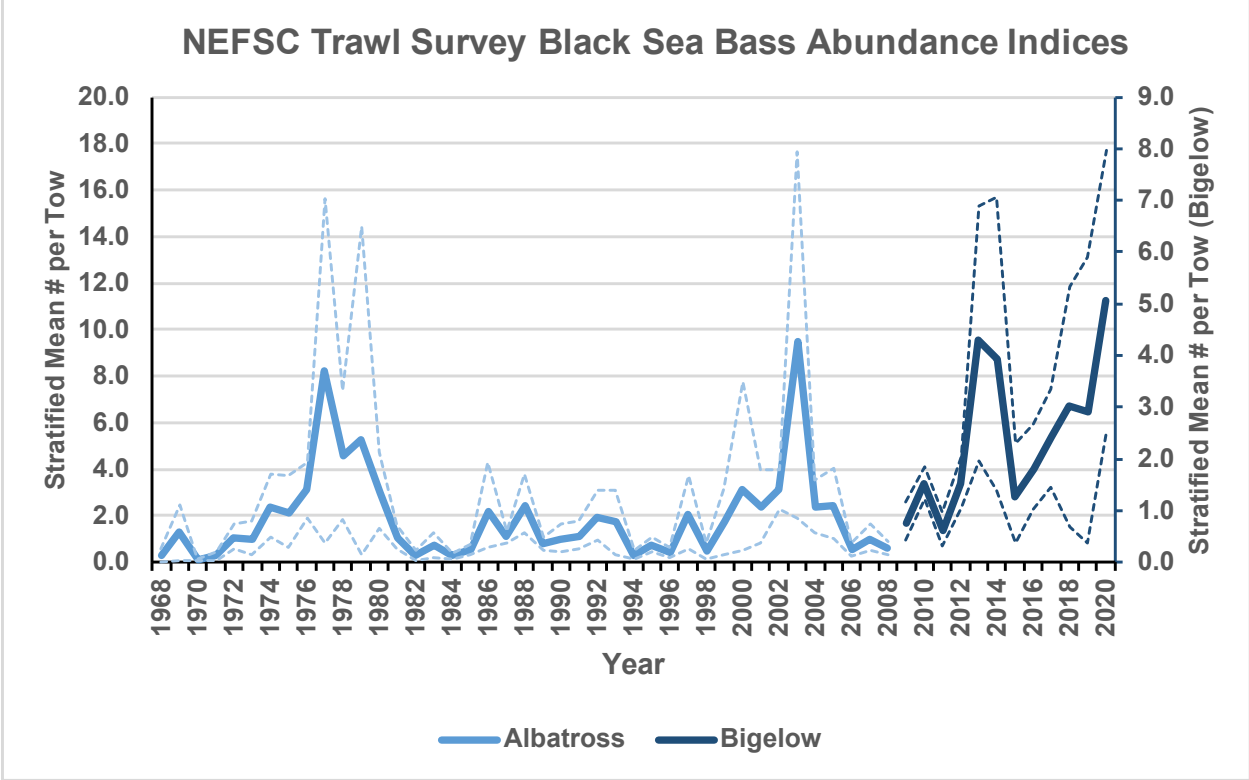


Figure 2. NEFSC Spring trawl survey abundance indices (\pm 90% CI) for black sea bass collected on FSVs Albatross IV (1968-2008) and H. B. Bigelow (2009-2020). Note: the 2020 index is based on incomplete survey.

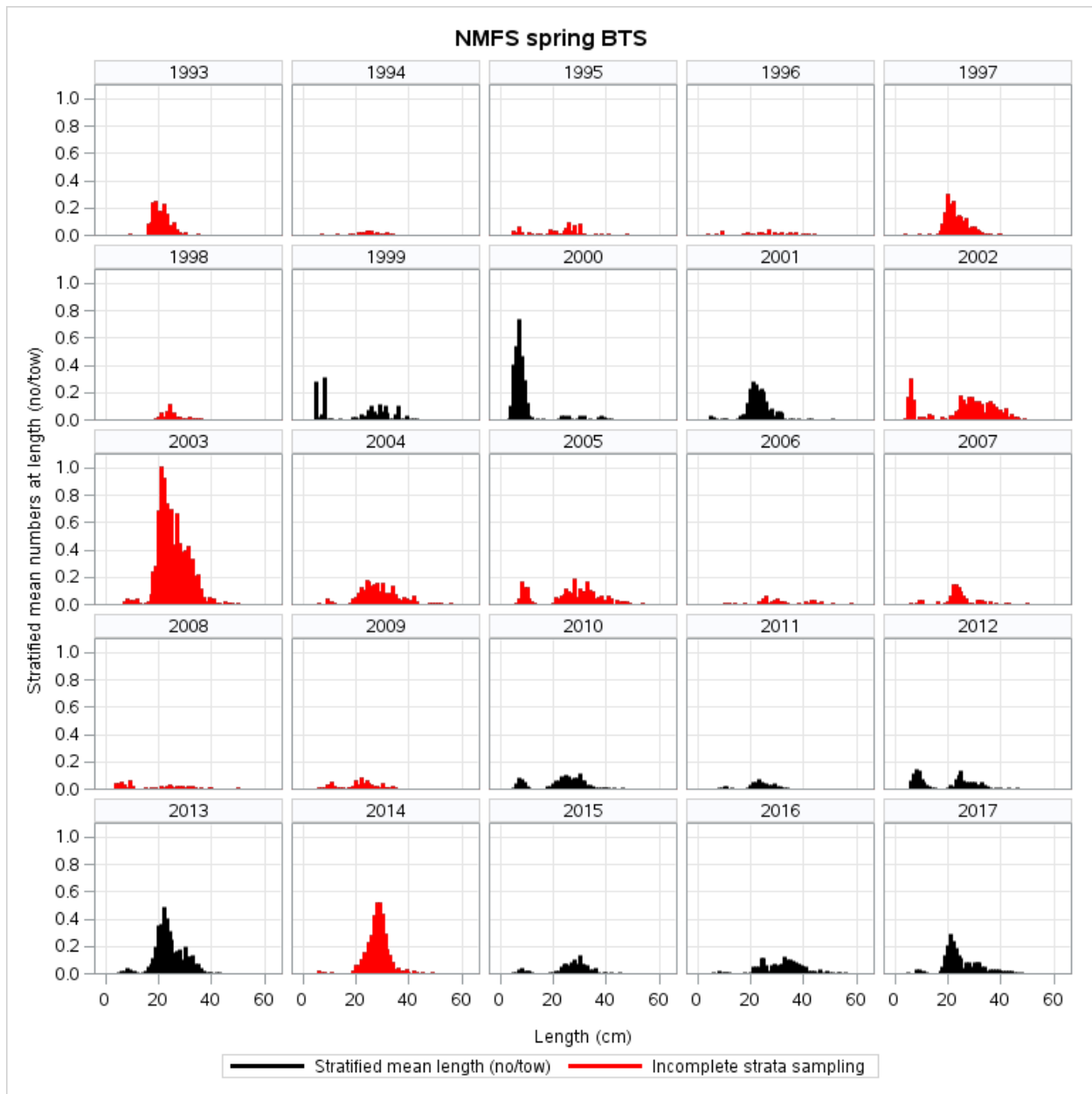


Figure 3. Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) spring trawl survey black sea bass indices at length. Indices since 2009 are uncalibrated Bigelow values. Note: the 2020 index is based on incomplete survey.

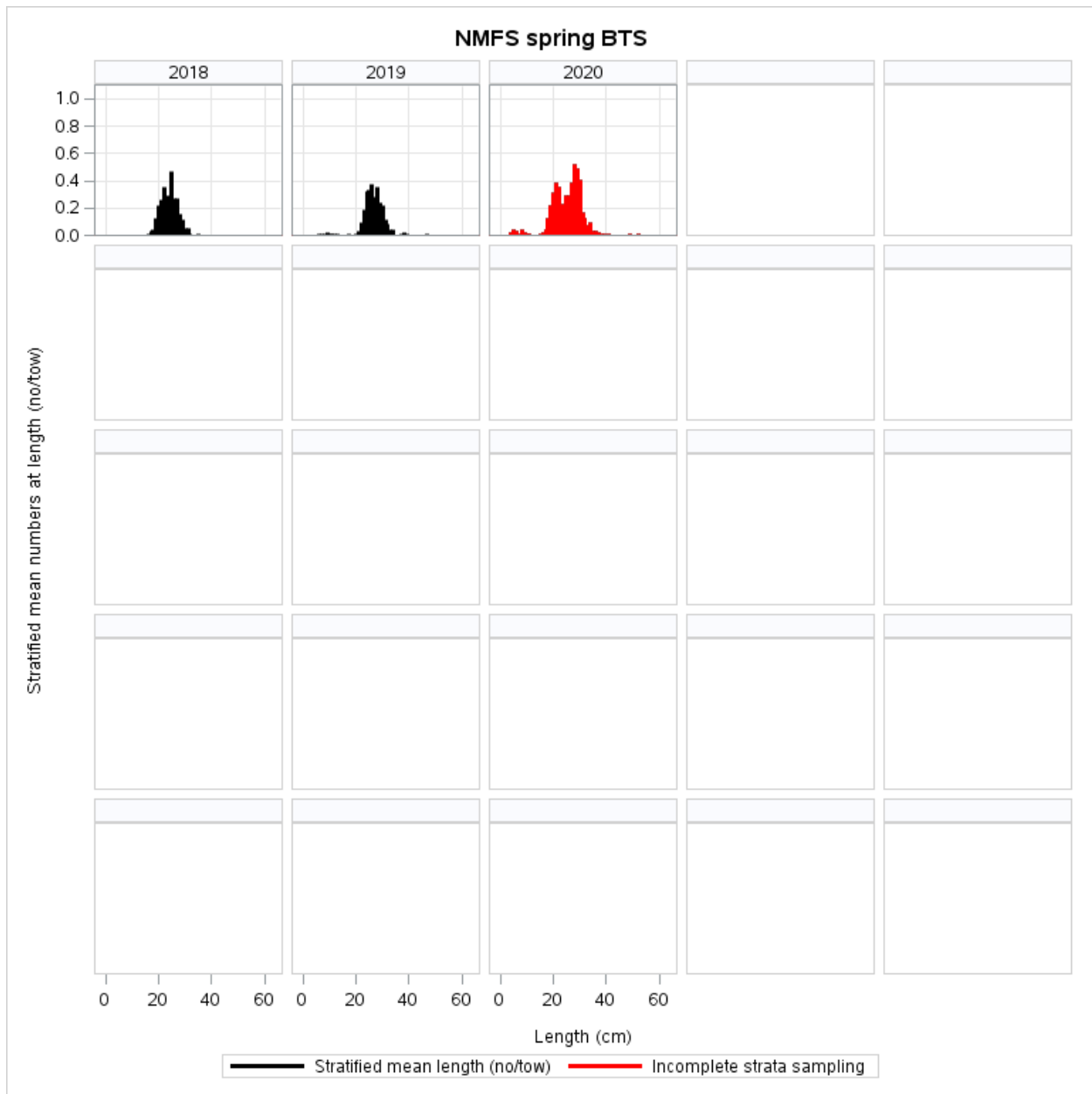


Figure 3 (cont'd). Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) spring trawl survey black sea bass indices at length. Indices since 2009 are uncalibrated Bigelow values. Note: the 2020 index is based on incomplete survey.